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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - DECEMBER 3

REF: KINSHASA 1064

¶1. (U) The items contained in this report consist principally of spot information from various sources. This report is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

Security Situation

¶2. (SBU) At a December 2 briefing in Goma, MONUC reported that the CNDP has asked MONUC to clear flight plans with them before flying over "sensitive" areas. MONUC rejected the request, pointing to its mandate, which permits the free movement of UN forces anywhere in the DRC.

¶3. (SBU) MONUC confirms that the CNDP has withdrawn from Ishasha, and is at present approximately three kilometers south of Kitanda. MONUC estimates that there are approximately 500 FDLR members in the area, although currently most clashes appear to be between Mai Mai forces and the CNDP.

¶4. (SBU) The CNDP is, however, maintaining its positions along the ridgeline southwest of Masisi. The FDLR also has a strong concentration in the area. A MONUC commander observed that the CNDP may not move on Masisi, if it wants to avoid a major conflict with the FDLR.

¶5. (SBU) The FARDC appears determined to hold Kanyabayonga, and MONUC's INDBATT has advised the FARDC on proper defensive deployments around the city. The FARDC has also replaced military commanders and some forces in the area in a bid to improve its performance against the CNDP.

Political Developments

¶6. (SBU) Press reporting notes that a meeting of military and police generals from member states of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) is ongoing in Kinshasa. The purpose of the meeting reportedly is to examine the crisis in eastern DRC, and draft recommendations for heads of state. (Note: while Post has heard rumors of a CEEAC heads of state meeting to be held in Kinshasa as well, it is possible that the current meeting is the one noted reftel and the only one scheduled for the moment. End note)

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